



MEMORANDUM NOTE DE SERVICE

TO
À

Paul Rochon

FROM
DE

Michelle Kovacevic

Approved by Michelle Kovacevic
Approuvé par Michelle Kovacevic

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SECRET
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Our file Notre référence
Your file Votre référence
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SUBJECT
OBJET

Meeting with Mr. Michael Green, President and Chief Executive Officer and Mr. Denis Gauthier, Chief Operating Officer of Canada Health Infoway.

For information. To be read before your meeting on January 18, 2018.

You will be meeting with Mr. Michael Green, President and Chief Executive Officer, and Mr. Denis Gauthier, Chief Operating Officer of Canada Health Infoway (Infoway).

We understand that they would like to discuss:

- Progress in the e-prescribing initiative, since the Budget 2017 investment of \$300 million over five years.
- Health Canada's review of pan-Canadian health organizations, which may lead to a re-imagining of the suite of organizations, including Infoway.

Federal funding to date

Since its creation in 2001, the Government of Canada has allocated \$2.1 billion to Infoway to support the development of electronic health information and communications technologies.

Budget 2016 allocated \$40 million to Infoway to launch a comprehensive multi-jurisdictional e-prescribing system and \$10 million help provinces and territories "scale up" telehomecare projects that were already underway.

Budget 2017 provided \$300 million over five years to expand e-prescribing and virtual care initiatives, support the continued adoption and use of electronic medical records, help patients to access their own health records electronically, and better link electronic health record systems to improve access by all providers and institutions.

Background

PrescribeIT Electronic Prescribing Service

With Government funding through Budgets 2016 and 2017, Infoway is working with Health Canada, provinces and territories, and health sector stakeholders to develop and implement a financially self-sustaining multi-jurisdiction electronic prescribing service known as PrescribeIT.

PrescribeIT will enable prescribers to transmit a prescription electronically to a patient's pharmacy of choice, eliminating the need for paper prescriptions. This would facilitate better information at point of care, and fewer errors in filing prescriptions, resulting in safer drug use, better health outcomes, and less fraud and system abuse. In short, e-prescribing promotes medication safety, and would be more convenient and efficient for patients and providers.

Budget 2016 funds focused on supporting the development of the core technology for PrescribeIT and piloting it in early adopting jurisdictions. Budget 2017 funding supported the scaling of the service across multiple jurisdictions.

Infoway selected a qualified solution provider, TELUS Health, as the technology vendor who is responsible for designing, building and operating PrescribeIT.

Review of the Federally-Funded Pan-Canadian Health Organizations

The Minister of Health appointed two external advisors, Dr. PG Forest and Dr. Danielle Martin, to undertake a review, which was launched in early October 2017, to provide advice and recommendations on the current suite of eight pan-Canadian health organizations:

- Canadian Center on Substance Use and Addiction (CCSA)
- Canadian Agency for Drugs and Technologies in Health (CADTH)
- Canadian Institute for Health Information (CIHI)
- Canadian Foundation for Healthcare Improvement (CFHI)
- Canada Health Infoway
- Canadian Patient Safety Institute (CPSI)
- Canadian Partnership Against Cancer (CPAC)
- Mental Health Commission of Canada (MHCC)

The review will assess the role and impact of these organizations to advance progress on pan-Canadian healthcare priorities and federal objectives in certain key areas. Some of these key areas include:

- Improving the affordability, accessibility and appropriate use of pharmaceuticals;
- Optimizing synergies between health data collection and information technologies;
- Re-imagining the organizations suite to drive consistency on key issues across Canada as well as advance a national, forward-looking vision for the health system.

Consultations with stakeholders and meetings with each of the organizations were completed in December 2017, and deliberations on these findings are currently ongoing. A report on the findings and advice by the external advisors is expected by March 2018.

Advisory Panel on Healthcare Innovation (2015)

On July 17, 2015, the Advisory Panel on Healthcare Innovation released its report, *Unleashing Innovation: Excellent Healthcare for Canada* ("the Naylor Report"). In it, the Panel recommended a more integrated approach to eHealth and that Infoway be dismantled, with its functions folded into a proposed healthcare innovation agency within two to three years, after completing projects currently underway. The Panel raised doubts on the capacity of Infoway to make the transition to mobile health and high-tech activities, such as promoting meaningful use of electronic health records with front-line healthcare providers, because it argued that Infoway does not alone have the governance, size, or expertise to oversee such an initiative. As such, it recommended that any future federal funding for digital health innovation flow from an innovation fund and not to a standalone entity like Infoway.

The Government did not implement the recommendations of the Naylor Report. [See Annex A for an excerpt of the recommendation from the Naylor Report related to Infoway.]

Considerations

PrescribeIT Electronic Prescribing Service

A multi-jurisdictional e-prescribing system would have many benefits for health system managers, health professionals and Canadians (e.g., more secure prescribing of narcotics and other controlled substances, improved data for narcotics monitoring programs, and enhanced medication compliance for Canadians, which is expected to reduce emergency department visits and re hospitalizations).

Review of the Federally-Funded Pan-Canadian Health Organizations



Key Messages



s.21(1)(a)

s.21(1)(b)

ANNEX A

From Unleashing Innovation: Excellent Healthcare for Canada

Page 44, paragraph 2:

“...the Panel’s assessment is that [Canada Health Infoway] should remain in place as a separate entity only to complete its current mandate or until the [innovation fund] and new [healthcare innovation agency] are established... With the rapid shifts in information technology and a greater emphasis on meaningful use of those tools, the playing field has changed, and a more integrated approach seems timely. Thus, the Panel is recommending that any new federal support for eHealth projects beyond existing commitments would flow through the [innovation fund], and that Infoway should fold into the [healthcare innovation agency] within two to three years...”

Recommendation 4.4

“Continue Canada Health Infoway *pro tem* as a separate organization with staffing to complete projects currently underway. Once the new Agency is established, fold relevant functions from Infoway into the Agency, and flow future federal funding for digital health through the Innovation Fund.”

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